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TO RUEHVI/AMEMBASSY VIENNA 0350
INFO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 5950
RUEHBW/AMEMBASSY BELGRADE 3373

UNCLAS PRISTINA 000270

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E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: OTRA ASEC VI
SUBJECT: COUNTRY CLEARANCE GRANTED TO JEFFREY HOVENIER

REF: VIENNA 896

¶1. US Office Pristina welcomes and grants country clearance to Jeffrey Hovenier to visit Pristina March 28-30, 2006. The purpose of the visit is to accompany Deputy Special Envoy Rohan to consult with Pristina authorities in advance of the April 3 meeting on decentralization. Point of contact is Deputy Econ/Pol Chief David Whiddon, who can be reached at: office 381-38-549-516 ext. 3241; GSM 377-44-153 565; fax 381-38-549-890.

¶2. Post understands that Mr. Hovenier does not require assistance from USOP. UNMIK is making all arrangements for this trip, including a hotel reservation in the Grand Hotel.

¶3. Kosovo is a cash (Euro) economy. There are a few operating ATMs. A few large stores and some hotels take credit cards. Not all ATMS are reliable and personnel should use normal ATM safety precautions. TDY personnel should bring sufficient cash or travelers' checks to cover all hotel and other incidental expenses and may exchange dollars for Euros from 9:00am-11:30am and 1:00pm-3:30pm each Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday and 9:00am-11:30am each Thursday at the U.S. Office cashier. Only USOP accepts travelers' checks. Reverse accommodation is available at the end of the visit.

¶4. Security issues: The security situation in Kosovo is fluid and there is still risk from occasional episodes of violence; incidents of ethnic violence continue to occur. Land mines remain in some outlying areas. Civil society institutions generally do not yet meet Western standards. There is criminal activity against internationals, including purse snatching and residential break-ins and general precautions are recommended. KFOR is deployed throughout Kosovo.

¶5. Travel to certain areas within Kosovo province requires fully armored vehicles and advance RSO approval. To facilitate planning, please provide travel itinerary to USOP in advance of arrival, as same-day travel can be difficult to arrange. To provide appropriate access to USOP facilities, visitors must ensure all necessary security clearances are included with travel messages.

¶6. Please ensure ASEC tags are included to ensure proper distribution. Specific questions regarding security may be addressed to USOP's RSO or your control officer.

GURIAN